# CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY, AT NO. 1, CHATHAM SQUARE, BY P. PRICE, AT $2 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

VOL. I. NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1831. NO. 4.

## ORIGINAL SERMON.

By Br. Robert Smith.

*"Another parable spake he unto them. The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened."* Mat. xiii, 33.

In the elucidation of the subject before us we beg leave to invite attention to the following particulars:

1st. The congeniality subsisting between the gospel, and the inherent principles of human nature.

2nd. Allude to its efficacy on the hearts and lives of those who are brought under its operation.

And finally notice the ultimate effects of divine grace in the ministry of reconciliation.

The congeniality, subsisting between the inherent principles of human nature and the gospel, is very aptly represented by the figure made use of in our text. For it is manifest that the leaven could have no possible operation in the meal, were there no similarity in their constituent principles. A oneness of nature must exist between them, else the one could never act upon the other. Add a thousand pounds of leaven to a barrel of sand, and when think you a fermentation might be expected?—never. So were the gospel and the inherent principles of human nature entirely dissimilar as they are sometimes represented, the one might be applied to the other, as long as human nature exists, without producing the slightest effect.

The same idea is exhibited by the representation of the gospel under the figure of bread. Here it is plain, that were there no conformity of nature between this bread which came down from heaven, and its recipient man, no benefit could be derived by him from the possession of it. It is from the fact, that bread is compounded of the same constituents that the human organization is, that it possesses the quality of nourishing the body and supporting life. So, it is because there is a harmony of nature between the moral constitution of man, and the gospel of Christ, that the latter affords spiritual nourishment, and imparts spiritual life to the former.

The gospel is emphatically denominated good news, and glad tidings of great joy. This however could not be the case, were men in the primary principles of their nature wholly averse to it. It is, as far as we are able to pursue the investigation, an invariable law of nature, that those things which are in accordance with the constitutional peculiarities of any creature, are best calculated to make that creature happy; and of consequence, those things which are averse to its nature, are calculated to destroy its happiness. Birds for example, being constituted congenial to the atmosphere, cannot subsist in water, while the fish, suited as it is to the denser element, expires on its removal from it. But the bird is as happy in the air, as the fish in his native element. And the fish can enjoy himself no where so well as in the water. Now, would it be good news to a bird to inform him, were he capable of comprehending such information, that he was about to be immersed in water, or to a fish that he should speedily be enveloped in air? Certainly not. But if either of them had by accident or otherwise got out of his proper element, the voice that promised him a certain restoration to it, would bring glad tidings of great joy. And the hand that restored him to that situation which his constitution qualified him to enjoy would confer on him a lasting benefit. Because it would deliver him from an unnatural situation and place him in that condition for which nature designed him.

The bird would not, however, be transformed to a fish by his immersion, nor would all the atmosphere by which our globe is surrounded convert the fish into a songster of the forest. Such is the good tidings the gospel presents to our contemplation, and such the blessings it imparts to us.

Man in a state of sin and alienation from God and holiness is out of his element, he is like a fish out of water; and the gospel in its operation restores him to the native dignity of his character, and revives in him those principles of moral rectitude, which like fire covered with ashes, had lain dormant and been concealed from observation.

Peter calls upon his brethren to praise God who had called them out of darkness into his marvellous light. Why were they to praise him for this? Doubtless because it was a blessing. And why was it a blessing? Because not being congenial with their nature, it was neither so pleasant, or agreeable to them, as was light. The prophet Isaiah says, speaking of Christ, that he is given for a light to the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison house. A total absence of light, blindness and incarceration, are all contrary to our nature. The eye was formed expressly to enjoy the blessing of light; and from the perfect possession of vision, a great part of our happiness results: hence, to give light to them that sit in darkness; and open the eyes of the blind, are blessings—simply because the enjoyment of sight, and the action of light on our visual organs, are in accordance with the principles of our nature. So the salvation of man from sin and his restoration to holiness, is a blessing to him, because his nature is opposed to sin and congenial with holiness, and from this cause, arises the felicity of that man into whose heart the light of the gospel has shined, giving him the knowledge of the glory of God, as it is exhibited in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Freedom is one of our inherent rights, and the most invaluable gift that heaven has conferred on man. Imprisonment, its opposite, is one of the most dire calamities. Nature shudders at the thought of being immured in a loathsome dungeon. Hence, to give enlargement to the prisoner, and deliverance to the captive, are conferring on them the greatest good which they are capable of receiving. No change however is effected in the nature of the captive, or the prisoner—it remains the same. The change, simply consists in removing him from an unnatural situation, and placing him in that condition most in accordance with his nature. It is thus with the gospel. Sin is an unnatural state, represented in the scriptures as being dead, in a foreign land, and in prison. The operation of the gospel upon the heart, is illustrated by the sinner being quickened—returning to his father's house—and being made free. You thus perceive in all those figures, the congeniality between the gospel, and the inherent principles of our nature is clearly recognized. And the supposition that man is by nature wholly averse to all good, and prone to all evil, is clearly refuted.

2dly. The power of leaven to amalgamate with the meal, forming of it one homogeneous mass, is a striking and happy illustration of the power of divine light, truth, and love in their operation in saving mankind from sin, and bringing them into reconciliation with God. To effect this reconciliation, was the great object of the gospel ministry. Hence, says the apostle Paul, 2 Cor. v, 18, 19, 20. "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambasadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The efficacy of the gospel in assimilating its recipients into a conformity with itself, is again alluded to in Paul's second epistle to the Cor. iii, 18. "But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord." Here it is worthy of remark, that the scriptures contemplate mankind as alienated from God through the ignorance that is in them. Now the gospel is the wisdom of God and the power of God. Under its operation this ignorance, which has caused the sinner's alienation, is removed, and he changed into its image. And receiving this wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, he increases in the knowledge of God, and walks worthy of the Lord in all well pleasing, being fruitful in every good work.

Under this transforming influence, the man who, through the ignorance that was in him, has vainly sought to satisfy the longing desires of his soul, with the husks of sensual pleasure and forbidden joys; who has listened to the syren voice of folly, when she has cried at the corners of the streets, saying, "stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant," and has gone like the ox to the slaughter or the fool to the correction of the stocks, and knew not till a dart has pierced through his liver, and he finds himself in the depths of hell: Under the operation, I say, of this transforming principle, the scales are removed from his eyes, the mist dissipated from his understanding, and he perceives that bitter as death are the ways of vice, that her house is the road to destruction, and that ruin and misery are in all her paths. And brought to himself, and finding that he is an alien, and in a strange country, his heart turns to his father's house, the home of his youth, his native state of innocence and purity.

3dly. The final effects of the grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men, is very appropriately set forth by the operation of leaven, in our text, said to continue its influence until the whole mass was leavened.

It certainly requires no argument to prove, that this figure teaches that all mankind will ultimately be brought under the transforming power of that purifying principle, by which sin is destroyed, and the image of God in the indi-

vidual, effaced and mutilated by the moral defilement he has contracted during his subjection to the present state of vanity, restored. Do you demand evidence of this? Mark the phraseology of the passage, "till the whole was leavened"—not a part, a fourth, a third, a half, but the whole.

And permit me, in return, to ask, who will object to this universal transformation of character? Are there any persons who are opposed to the people being all made righteous? Do any of you object to your wicked neighbors being converted from the error of their ways? Are any of you who are parents unwilling that your ungodly children should forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way of understanding. Is there any son or daughter, who would not rejoice to see his intemperate, profane or quarrelsome father, transformed in the spirit of his mind? Does a good magistrate object to *all* the citizens within his jurisdiction, becoming honest, peaceable and virtuous? Well, my friends, it is this kind of change that the gospel effects. A change from sin to holiness; from pollution to purity; from hatred to love; from vice, wickedness and crime to perfect exemption from every species of transgression.

This is the Universalism we believe in. And this the Universalism we preach. And this Univarsalism, we have no doubt, will extend its benign influence, sooner or later, over every son and daughter of Adam. Some are brought in a good degree under its benign agency in this life. As the particles of meal more immediately in contact with the leaven, were soonest partakers of its action: while those that were more remote, did not receive its influence until a later period: so, those who now place themselves within the reach of the principles of the gospel, will experience at once its quickening and renovating power; while those who stand aloof, may continue all their life time, subject to the bondage of that death which carnal mindedness invariably brings upon the soul, and procrastinate the period of their emancipation from the dreary captivity and galling thraldom of iniquity, till the arrival of that day, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed, every knee be brought to bow to God, and the kingdom be given up to the Father, and God become all in all.

But we are not left to deduce our evidences on this interesting subject from Parables merely. We have a more sure word of prophesy to which we shall do well at all times to take heed as to a light that shineth in a dark place, and by which this universal submission of all things to God, is taught in the plainest and fullest manner, and in language that cannot be misconstrued or misunderstood. Paul dwelt upon it in the first chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians, in a phraseology that admits of no interpretation, that does not involve the final subjection of all things to him. Wherein says he, "God hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself: that, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." Here you will observe, that as in the parable the whole mass of meal is leavened: so the apostle, in the passage just recited, speaks of all things being gathered together in Christ. He says again. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away." And again, "as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Now when all are made alive in Christ; when all things are gathered together in him and thus become new creatures, will not the whole lump be leavened?

Again—We have observed that the design of the gospel, was to bring man into a state of reconciliation with his Maker. How many, it will be asked, are made the recipients of this atonement, and have the enmity of their hearts slain thereby? Our Lord says, "all that the Father hath given me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Now if we can ascertain what the Father's will is, concerning the final destiny of his rational family, we shall be able satisfactorily to answer the questions, who shall come to Christ, and be by him raised up again at the last day?

Paul says, to such queries: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "For it hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, and (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him I say whether they be things in heaven or things in earth." "And you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." Here we learn that Christ came into the world not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. God highly exalted him, and gave him a name above every name, expressly that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue glorify God, in confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord.

It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, that by him he might reconcile all things to himself. Thus you perceive, that it is the will of God that all men should be saved. Christ came not to do his own will, but the will of him who sent him. It therefore follows, that the whole human race will ultimately be thus reconciled, and so the whole lump will be leavened.

Finally, the gospel is calculated to remove that ignorance which is the cause of our moral alienation. It therefore becomes an important query; from how many shall this ignorance finally be removed?

Isaiah answers in the following emphatic language: "And he will destroy in this mountain, the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." Jeremiah, on the same subject, says, "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them, unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more." Our Saviour says, "this is eternal life, to know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

Now my friends, when all shall know God from the least to the greatest, when all shall behold as with open face the glory of the Lord, and be transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, will not the whole lump be leavened?

A few words on the moral tendency of the view we have taken of this subject; and we will bring our remarks to a close.

From what we have advanced, we learn, first, that man, as a moral being, is intrinsically good; that alienation from God, is an unnatural state to him; that sin makes no part of the inherent principles of his moral constitution? Now what is likely to be the natural influence of this truth upon his mind. The first legitimate effect of it is to raise him in his own estimation; to present him to himself as naturally allied to the Father of the spirits of all flesh; and teach him that sin is a foreign matter, wholly unconnected with his original nature, and pernicious in its operation upon him. And secondly, that it is his interest, as well as his duty, to expel this enemy; to return to the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul, and no longer wander from his Father's house, but claim and possess his high prerogative, and by ceasing to do evil and learning to do well, regain that noble standing in the scale of being, for which his Creator has so eminently qualified him.

We hesitate not to say, that imparting to man ennobling views of himself, is calculated to produce the best moral consequences. Take from an individual his reputation, rob him of his good name, sink him in his own estimation, and you take from him every motive—every inducement to be virtuous. We see examples of this continually in the unfortunate victims of their country's offended laws. Once consigned to the cells of a penitentiary, their self respect is destroyed; their moral feelings depraved, and they turned loose upon the world, without a tie to bind them to virtue, or a motive to deter them from vice. It is a universal maxim, to destroy a man's character and obliterate his self esteem, lays the axe directly at the root of his moral principles. Prevail on men therefore to believe that they are totally depraved, and you place them on the high road to become so: whereas convince them that the depravity that adheres to them, is a mere adventitious contamination, and makes no part of the moral constitution of their nature,

> "And you the strongest reason give,
> Why they religiously should live;
> And purge their hearts from every sin,
> And strive to keep their conscience clean."

2dly. We learn from our subject, that all men are to be reconciled to God, that the ignorance that now leads them astray, and causes them to go in the hard way of the transgressor, is ultimately to be removed, and they be brought to know, to enjoy and glorify, thoughout eternity, their Father in heaven. Now what feelings is this truth calculated to produce in the mind of him who sincerely believes it. The certainty of the successful result of any undertaking, always acts as a stimulant to urge the accomplishment of it. Let a man, about to engage in any pursuit, be perfectly assured of success, and he will exert himself with untiring zeal and indefatigable perseverance. Whereas, involve his prospects in doubt and uncertainty; let the chances of his failure to that of his success, bear the proportion of a thousand to one, and he will sink down in despondency, give up all hope of effecting his intention, and abandon the pursuit.

Convince mankind that religion is difficult of acquisition, that to become reconciled to God is a work of immense labor, and over which the thick darkness of uncertainty is thrown, and you deter them from making use of any exertion in so hopeless an enterprize.

But represent their reconciliation as certain, and easy of accomplishment, and you offer the most direct inducements to apply themselves earnestly and immediately to the work.

A son has transgressed his father's law, and conscious of the turpitude of his conduct, and apprehensive of his parent's displeasure, he forsakes the paternal roof, and looks upon himself as an outcast. Now so long as he believes that his father is angry with him, is his enemy, and is preparing to punish him with unrelenting severity; so long will he continue in a state of alienation from him. But satisfy him that his father is not his foe, but his friend, that he is not only willing to receive him to his arms, but is determined to effect a reconciliation of the truant wanderer to himself; and you offer him

the plainest inducements to return immediately to the home of his infancy, to his duty and allegiance to his parent: so, convince mankind that their heavenly Father is not their foe, but is their faithful unchangeable friend; and that he designs in the fulness of time to reconcile all things to himself—and that ignorance of the divine character, and of the individual's true interest which caused him to wander on the dark mountains of sin, and sojourn in the strange land of iniquity, being removed from the mind, he no longer contemplates the Deity as his enemy, but sees in him a kind Father; and cherishes towards him only feelings of affection and thankfulness. So far therefore as love and gratitude to God may be classed among the virtues which adorn the christian character, the subject before us is calculated to produce the best moral consequences.

Finally. Our subject presents us the well confirmed assurance, that all mankind are equally the objects of our heavenly Father's love, and travellers to the same eternal home of peace and joy—of purity and bliss. And thus in the most direct manner crumbles to atoms, and consigns to the perpetual oblivion of everlasting forgetfulness, those partial distinctions that have so long fostered the intolerant spirit of sectarian bigotry.

Under its benign agency, the self complaisant aristocracy of false religion passes away as the morning cloud and early dew. Its recipient no longer asks, ere he extends the hand of kindness and relief to a suffering individual, to what church he belongs—by what name he designates the God he worships—how many or what description of theological dogmas his creed contains. He does not even inspect the color of his skin—the longitude of his countenance—the gravity of his deportment, or pause to survey the fashion of his coat, take the admeasurement of the brim of his hat, or ascertain whether he conforms in the phraseology of his language to his own usage. But finding him in need of his friendly aid, and knowing him only as a member of the same family—a child of the same common parent, and an heir of the same eternal weight of glory, the tenderness of a brother's heart yearns over his sufferings, and the ready hand of relief administers spontaneously to his necessities.

Thus, in all its multifarious ramifications, the moral influence of that gospel, which presents to our admiring vision the rich surper-abundance of the goodness of God in the final restitution of all things, is most decidedly beneficial.

## THE PHRASES,

### BORN AGAIN, NEW CREATURE, &c.

1. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* *John* iii, 3.

Notwithstanding Nicodemus seemed perplexed by this expression, it still appears that the phraseology was familiar enough to the Jews, and that it had obtained among them a well known meaning. By them it was employed to denote any important change of one's religion, character, office or condition, such as the renunciation of idolatry, the forsaking of vice, and especially the conversion of a proselyte from the heathen nations to Judaism. Dr. Lightfoot says, "the Jews acknowledged, in order to proselytism, some kind of regeneration or new birth absolutely necessary; but then this was very slightly and easily attainable." And for authority, he quotes the following as one of their sayings:—"*If any one becomes a proselyte, he is like a child new born.*"† Schoettgen likewise asserts that "the mystery of regeneration or new birth was not wholly unknown to the ancient Jews; as appears from the circumstance that they used the phrase, *a new creature*. Thus, they say of Abraham, when he renounced idolatry and was chosen by God, *He was made a new creature*. Other instances to the same purpose, will be adduced when we come to 2 Cor. v, 17.—The later Jews express themselves as follows: *He who repents, must become like a new born child.*"‡

Such having been the usage of this phraseology, it was natural that our Saviour should employ it in a similar sense, to apprize Nicodemus that a conversion even from Judaism was as necessary to the reception of the gospel, on the one hand, as was a conversion from heathenism, to admission into the commonwealth of Israel, on the other. In this latter case, the Jews were accustomed to say that the proselyte became as a child new born; contrary to all their expectations, they themselves were now required to pass through a similar new birth, in order to become subjects of their Messiah's kingdom.

But here it will perhaps be asked, How could Nicodemus, a master in Israel, mistake this phraseology, if it was so well understood by the Jews? We suspect that what he mistook was not so much the *phraseology*, as its *relation* to himself and his countrymen. One fact is manifest in the very nature of things: he could not really suppose that our Saviour intended the absurd idea which he affected to give the expression, "born again." And it is worthy of particular notice, that in the explanation immediately subjoined, Christ invariably retained the word "born," without either dropping or defining the figure, as though that had occasioned no difficulty to his hearer; and he finally demanded, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" thus intimating that the language was intelligible enough to a well informed Jew. The following considerations may perhaps account for the cavil in Nicodemus's answer, and at the same time discover in what his real ignorance consisted: He was aware that there must be what was popularly called a new birth, in those that came over from the Gentiles to the Jewish religion; but that another similar conversion from this religion was necessary, in order to introduce one into the Messiah's kingdom, was a supposition, the possibility of which had never entered his mind. When therefore the "teacher come from God," required that he and his brethren should thus be born again, or proselytized, he was confounded. They were already pious Israelites, thoroughly instructed in the knowledge and practice of what was supposed the perfection of godliness, and entitled, as children of Abraham, to be the subjects of the Messiah; and in reference to these characters, he could not conceive either the propriety or the manner of such a new birth. Being perplexed by the subject, he sought, like many an opponent in similar difficulties, to construe the language into the greatest imaginable absurdity; and this he did, not because he was ignorant of its accustomed meaning, but because he understood not how it could be applied to the case in view.

2. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:—old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.—2 Cor. v, 17.

The latter clause in this text alludes, perhaps, to the thorough change of religion then taking place, from the old Jewish and Gentile institutions on the one hand, to the Christian system on the other. In this last dispensation, all things were new, both its doctrine and its practice; and he who came over to it, was, in the same sense, a new creature. There was, indeed, no metamorphosis of his nature; but his views were changed, his notions of duty corrected, and the general tenor of his life renovated. He became what we denominate, even to this day, in familiar discourse, a new man.

It is easy to see that a change similar in principle, though not the same in circumstances, must have attended the sincere proselytes from idolatry to the Jewish religion. Accordingly, we find that the Jews were accustomed to call them new creatures; and since the cotemporary usage of the term helps to account for its occurrence in the New Testament, and furnishes the probable standard for its interpretation, we shall insert a few instances. Abraham, they said, was made a new creature in forsaking the service of idols for that of God. Schoettgen quotes from their ancient writers the maxims that *Proselytes to the true religion*, that is, *to the law, are said to have their souls created anew;* and that *He who converts another to the law, does virtually create him.*" Indeed, they used this figure to denote any remarkable change of character, employment, or relation in life. Thus, they said that *He whose sins are blotted out, is made a new creature;* that the *Priest*, at his consecration and entrance on his office, *was made a new creature, by the oil with which he was anointed*, that is, he was thus set apart to a new occupation; that *Abraham*, on the birth of Ishmael, *was made a new creature, that he should beget sons and become great over all.*

From such examples it is evident, that the phrase in question was then used with the same latitude of meaning, which it now bears in our ordinary conversation; and that nothing can be more absurd than to build upon it the doctrine of a miraculous transformation of our nature.

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*Another fault at protracted meetings.*—The editor (or editors) of the Vermont Chronicle, says the Universalist Watchman, have pointed out more faults at protracted meetings, which we are extremely happy to see noticed in that paper; among which is the following:—

"Being afraid of Metaphysics—such Metaphysics we mean as the Bible teaches. Some think that they must labor wholly for excitement, and that instruction, argument, discussion, would be out of place. On the contrary, sound, doctrinal instruction, is never more in season, never more needed. The minds of men are prepared to receive it with avidity, and think upon it in earnest, and candidly. They are excited. Let them be excited about something in particular—something important—something permanent, that their excitement may itself be made durable and permanent. Choose, however, proper subjects. Keep close to the Bible. Let your Metaphysics be only such as bear directly on faith and repentance."

We hope these editors will continue to expose the faults at these meetings till they shall have pointed them all out. By so doing they will, we should hope, be the means of saving many from insanity and suicide.

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*Adieu.*—This is an expression of farewell, familiarly used by all classes of people; but its derivation, which is a beautiful one, is not generally known. It comes from the French words *a Dieu*—to God—implying, I depart from you, but leave you to the protection of Heaven.

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* I am unwilling to omit the following remarks of Dr. Lightfoot on this passage, notwithstanding they do not relate to the phrases under consideration: "We must not suppose it a set discourse merely, and on purpose directed upon the subject of regeneration, though the doctrine of the new birth may be well enough asserted and explained from hence. But the question is about the aptitude and capacity of the man qualified to be a partaker of the kingdom of God, or of heaven, or of the times or benefits of the Messiah; for that the kingdom of God or of heaven, are terms convertible in the evangelist, is obvious to every one who will take the pains to compare them; and that by the kingdom of God or of heaven is meant the kingdom and times of the Messiah, is so plain that it needs no argument to prove it. When, therefore, there was so vehement and universal an expectation of the coming and reign of the Messiah amongst the Jews; and when some token and indication of these times might appear to Nicodemus in the miracle that Christ had wrought; our Saviour instructs him by what way and means he may be made apt and capable for seeing and entering into the kingdom, and enjoying the benefits and advantages of Messiah's days." *Lightfoot's Horæ Heb. et Talmud. in loco.*

† Lightfoot's Horæ Heb. et Talmud. on John iii, 3.

‡ Schoettgenii Horæ Heb. et Talmud. in John iii, 3.

FROM THE GOSPEL ANCHOR.

## TRUE WISDOM.

*" But the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."* James iii, 17.

As God is the " author of every good and perfect gift", whatever emanates from him, will, in a measure, partake of those qualities, which are stamped on his character. This is just as certain as that the stream will partake of the qualities of the fountain from which it flows.

We are at the present time, invited to listen to the voice of the preacher, and are assured that he will give us those salutary instructions which *wisdom* teaches her children. If, then, we would ascertain whether the doctrine be of God, or whether they speak of themselves—if we would desire to know whether we were listening to the words of *wisdom*, let us try them by the rule laid down in the text for our guide.

The wisdom that is from above, is first *pure*. God is *essentially* pure, and whatsoever proceeds from him, or is the dictate of his spirit, will have the character of purity. When it is preached that man is totally depraved ; that God created him in this condition, and that what he pronounced *good*, is actually the most corrupt and degenerate work of his hands; and that unless he create him over again, he will continue forever in that state ; and still farther, that this new creation will be exhibited in favor of a very few, compared to the great bulk of mankind, the doctrine is *impure*, it is *unholy*, and consequently the wisdom is not from *above* but from *beneath*.

True wisdom is *peaceable*. God is the author of *order* and not *confusion*. When the ministration of the word creates trouble, despair and dismay, where it drives some to insanity, and others to suicide, the wisdom that produces these extravagancies, is *earthly, sensual, and devilish*.

Wisdom from above, is *gentle* and *easy to be entreated*. It listens to the wants of the creature; removes the difficulties that beset him in the path of inquiry. Instead of driving him to obedience to an arbitrary rule, it delights in *reasoning* the subject, and showing him the propriety, by convincing him by proper means, and not by *frightening* him into a forced and unnatural compliance. When such measures as these are adopted, to convert the sinner from the error of his way, the *remedy* is worse than the *disease*.

Again, heavenly wisdon is *full of mercy and good fruits*. He, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom, is a God whose *mercy* is everlasting, and whose *goodness* is unbounded, for he is " *good unto all*." Any doctrine that serves to derogate from his character, by limiting his goodness, or detracting from the eternal nature of his mercy, is at variance with the qualities of that wisdom described in the text.

Lastly, the wisdom from above, is *without partiality* and *without hypocrisy*. Do men teach that God has his *favorites ;* that there are some on whom he will shower eternal blessings, while the less favored children of his family, will dwell forever under his implacable wrath ? Then they present to our view, a Deity of the most partial character—so partial that we should be ashamed to be charged with such a one ourselves. Do people teach that God has *two* wills, his *revealed* will, which is " that all men shall be saved and come to the knowledge of his truth," and his *secret* will, that a few only shall be saved ? Then they charge him with *hypocrisy*. Or do they, on the other hand, say that his invitations are to all, and that the salvation which he bestows is free, and then in the next breath, talk of our works to *pay* for a *free gift*, they charge him with hypocrisy or insincerity—call it by what name you please.

In judging then, a righteous judgment, let us examine doctrines by scripture rules, and if any man seem to be wise, and a teacher of the weak and foolish, let us see that his teachings be agreeable to the character of that " wisdom which is from above." L.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

## UNIVERSALISM.

Could every person be induced to learn and understand what Universalism is, we do believe every person would become a Universalist. No —we take this back—there are some persons whose minds naturally or from education—we leave this point for metaphysicians to settle—are so narrow and contracted, that we suppose it is impossible for *them* to receive a system so expanded and noble as that of Universalism. Like the partial and bigoted Jew of old, " they *cannot* enter in because of unbelief," and moreover "they cannot believe." Such persons will probably live and die in their present partial views of the goodness and salvation of the Father of the spirits of all flesh. But with this qualification, we believe that if all people having ordinary powers of perception, and minds disposed to candor withal, were permitted to become acquainted with Universalism in its true character, they must be constrained to see and confess its scriptural character, its reasonableness and its adaptation to the wants of mankind.

But, unhappily, the truth is, people are not allowed by their teachers, or they dare not allow themselves, to become acquainted with this doctrine as it is actually professed. The limitarian clergy and presses—and their name is legion, for they are many—are continually employed in misrepresenting our doctrine, as the only means of keeping the public from admiring and embracing it. They are careful never to state it as it actually is ; on the contrary, they seem to employ all the ingenuity they can command—and like people of old, " they have sought many inventions"—to misrepresent and caricature the system, till they make it a hideous monster, at which it is no wonder many timid and credulous souls should revolt. Now, how to gain access to such people, is the difficulty. Their eyes are blinded and their ears stopped by the prejudices which their teachers have encouraged amongst them; and it is almost as hopeless of thinking to bring them into the liberty of the Gospel and the peace of believing, as it was to bring the Jews into the kingdom of Christ in our Saviour's time. But let us faint not, neither become weary in a good cause. In the face of opposition, let us continue to speak, " whether men will hear or whether they will forbear." Let the press spread before the people the true light, and we yet may hope that all who have eyes to see, will rejoice in its greatness and glory. Let the ministers of the word " shun not to declare the whole counsel of God." Sweeping away the refuge of lies and misrepresentations as often as they find it thrown up in their way, and exhibiting by their own lives, the benign tendency of the doctrine of " the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men." Let private christians exert themselves fearlessly and valiently in their sphere, shunning no occasion to " contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints ;" and employing all the other means within their command for enlightening the understandings of their neighbors and fellow citizens. In this way we shall not run as do those who beat the air; we shall see the work of the Lord prosper in our hands, and realize the blessedness of beholding multitudes crowding into the gates of gospel light and salvation, " as clouds and as doves to their windows."

FROM THE MAGAZINE AND ADVOCATE.

## NOTICE.

The subscriber wishing to be serviceable to the religious public, and especially to the rising generation on whom much depends for the correction of the prevailing doctrinal abuses, earnestly requests the efficient and influential friends of liberal Christianity to give him all possible and correct information on the following subjects.

1. A particular notice of persons whose intellect has been injured for a time, or who are now in a state of mental derangement from religious excitement—from an earnest belief in the doctrine of endless wo, or from the fear that they had committed " *the unpardonable sin*."

2. Particular information of persons who have died despairing of salvation, and whose days seemed to be shortened by a diseased mind, under the influence of the same horrid sentiment.

3. Particular information of persons committing suicide in consequence of religious delusion, or under the influence of the unscriptural doctrine of endless misery. And

4. Particular information of those who have destroyed or murdered their own children or others, from the same influence, under the impression, that as Children had not committed " the unpardonable sin," to murder them when young would be the means of saving them from endless wo.

I wish the statement of *names* of *persons* and *places—dates* and *circumstances*, and the whole subscribed by two or three responsible persons, that every case may be well substantiated.

It is particularly requested that every philanthropist would give early attention to the above, and forward the information to me as soon as possible, that the whole may be spread out before the world in a pamphlet or book for children and youth, that they may see the snares to which they are exposed by yielding to the influence of religious error. W. I. Reese.

*East Bloomfield, N. Y., Oct.* 31, 1831.

FROM THE BOSTON TRUMPET.

## AUTHENTICITY OF TRACTS.

We have often declared, that all the Tracts which the orthodox publish, are not true—that some of the narratives are fictitious, evidently so, and that they are foisted upon the public as being true. So general had this impression become, that the American Tract Society felt themselves bound to notice the charge, which they have done in a recent publication. But in attempting their justification, they have been compelled to acknowledge that *the charge* is in part *true*. This is a singular way to exculpate themselves.

" Two Tracts, having been ascertained to be fiction, and a third of which the authenticity was very questionable, have been recently expunged from the series."

This is their own testimony. Again it is conceded, that some of the tracts are " palpably allegorical," and of course then, they are false.

But they maintain that the Tract entitled the " Honest Waterman," which is full of the grossest inconsistencies and contradictions, is true. Now we know that it is *not true*, for both parts of a direct contradiction cannot be true. All the evidence that the American Tract Society gives of its truth is this—that the Secretary of the London Society has written them a letter, in which he vouches that it is true. This he would very naturally do, because the London Society first published the deception, and feel themselves bound unquestionably to sustain it. We are now more convinced than ever, that the American Tract Society has palmed off upon the public the sheerest deceptions.

The best rules to form a young man, are, to talk little, to hear much, to reflect alone upon what has passed in company, to distrust one's own opinions, and value others that deserve it.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1831.

## THE DILEMMA.

The popular Theology teaches us that the penalty of God's law is *eternal death*, in other words, *endless misery in hell*. When the Almighty said to Adam, Genesis, 2. 17, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," it must therefore be acknowledged that he threatened him with endless misery *in the day* he transgressed. It is notorious however that Adam did not die even a natural death, on the day he ate of the forbidden fruit, and it is consequently impossible that the penalty of the law which was threatened, could have been inflicted.

Now the dilemma. If you say that eternal death is the penalty of God's law, and acknowledge as you must that Adam did not die *in the day* of disobedience as he was threatened, *you accuse God of lying*.

If you say that eternal death is not the penalty of the divine law, you must be reckoned a *heretic*, and of course "put out of the synagogue." Christian reader, which do you love most, the praise of men, or the praise of God?

The Rev. Josiah Hopkins, in a work entitled, "The Christian's Guide," in order to escape the difficulty we have suggested, holds the following dialogue: "*Question.* If eternal death be the penalty of the law, was not the declaration of the serpent true, 'Thou shalt not surely die?' and how was the contrary declaration of the Almighty fulfilled?" We acknowledge the question fairly stated, but how is it met? "*Answer.* Adam did not die an eternal death, nor did he enter upon such a state, it is true: but no thanks to him or the serpent either; because it was justly deserved, and because it was suspended, not as an act of *justice*, but of infinite *grace*."

Here let us observe, Mr. Hopkins acknowledges that God threatened eternal death, and he also acknowledges that he did not inflict it. What is this but saying that *God lied?* But Mr. Hopkins is not satisfied with accusing the Almighty of falsehood: he must also bring forward the *serpent, the Devil*, as a preacher of *truth*. Now it happens that this unfortunate man not only outrages common sense, but also plainly contradicts the Bible. "God is not man that he should *lie;* neither the son of man that he should repent; hath he *said*, and will he not *do it?* or hath he *spoken*, and shall he not *make it good?*" The apostle says he "*cannot* lie." Mr. Hopkins says he not only *can*, but actually *has*, and that too, in a case when his veracity was most deeply and eternally concerned. Our Saviour says, "The devil was a murderer from the beginning, and *abode not* in the *truth*, because *there is no truth in him*. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it." But Mr. Hopkins, and all limitarians, in order to support the tottering system of endless misery, will acknowledge that the first declaration the devil ever made—a declaration made too in direct opposition to the express word of God, *proved true*, while the Almighty, alas! forfeited forever his character for veracity. S.

## TRUTH.

"Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor."
Zech. vii, 16.

A philosopher was once asked, "what a man gains by telling a falsehood," and immediately replied, "not to be believed when he speaks the truth." The reverence paid to truth and the estimation in which it is held is often most notorious in those who practice it least; for their ingenuity is kept forever on the rack, and every artifice in their power is called in requisition to persuade the world that they are *honest* and *true* men. "Virtue and truth," says the Turkish Spy, "are respected every where. Turn thee from east to west, from the north to the south, thou wilt find on all sides impious men who blaspheme the Deity, but true virtue has this of singular—that she is always respected, and even by the most profligate."

He who is most scrupulous in telling the truth, frequently manifests to an inexperienced observer the least anxiety about it. The fact is, truth is simple and easily told; while to invent and pass off a plausible falsehood requires forethought and caution. And after all there is no little danger attending it, for no adage is more just than the old and somewhat vulgar one, that "the devil often gets us into difficulty, but never lifts a finger to get us out." *To be believed a liar* seems to me but a poor recompense for all one's vexation and study in telling lies; and yet it is the only certain reward that this wicked world confers. It costs a great deal to tell falsehoods to injure our fellow men, and kicks and curses are the only pay we get for it. S.

## CHRISTIAN DUTY.

"Be ye, therefore, followers of God as dear children."
Eph. v, 1.

The word here rendered *followers*, simply means *imitators*, and should be so understood. "Be ye therefore imitators of God." This injunction of the Apostle presents in a clear light the christian's duty. He must *imitate*, as far as possible, his Father. Hence arises the necessity of his knowing God and being acquainted with his character. If God is an angry, wrathful being, the christian must be so likewise. If God indulges feelings of revenge, "vindictive justice," the christian must be revengeful too. If God hates his enemies and meditates injury for those who disobey, the christian must foster the same spirit and pursue the same course of conduct. If God has passed by and forcordained some of his children to everlasting torments, the christian parent may make a similar distinction in his little family, and yet (dare we say it?) be as good as God.

But if on the other hand, God is merciful, the christian will learn to imitate him in his mercy. If he is holy and just the christian must become so too. If he "is kind to the unthankful and the evil," the christian must exercise the same kindness. In short, the christian must be like his God.

It is of the highest importance therefore that we have just conceptions of the Divine character, for when a man is sincere in the faith he professes, he will in some measure discover by his conduct the Deity he worships. When we learn that Calvin caused Servetus to be burnt with a slow fire, we need not ask whether the God he adored was a malignant and cruel tyrant. Calvin only imitated his God, and gave Servetus on earth a foretaste of those undying flames in which he fancied the Deity would torment him forever.

"Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear children." But remember that God "is *good to all*." Let then "all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from among you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ hath forgiven you." S.

## FOREKNOWLEDGE AND FOREORDINATION.

There is much childish dispute among theologians about the difference between *foreknowledge* and *foreordination*. They may quarrel and perplex each other with their metaphysical distinctions and subtleties as much as they please, but to the plain reflecting christian, it is all worth nothing. A few words cannot but set this subject in its true light. God could not have foreknown an event which would not come to pass: for should it not come to pass, he could not have foreknown it, or his *foreknowledge* must have been *false*, which is a solecism. If he foreknew that an event would transpire, it must necessarily do so—it is fixed as certain—in other words, it is foreordained or pre-established. If not, it might fail to transpire, which would entirely destroy the foreknowledge. With God, then, (and he is the only being to whom the terms are applicable) there is no difference between foreknowledge and foreordination. What is foreordained must be foreknown, and what is foreknown must be foreordained. S.

## ATHEISM.

Atheism presents a strange medley of exalted and degrading conceptions of human nature. At one time it raises man with all his folly and weakness to the summit of intellectual glory, and says boldly and proudly, yet foolishly we think, that *there is no knowledge but human*. And yet man (strange as it may seem) with all his knowledge, understands not his own physical frame—knows not how a spear of grass springs up or a bud puts forth! With the highest effort of his intellect he cannot comprehend one in a thousand of the wonderful things around him. At another time this same man, who is the only knowing being in existence, is regarded as little, if any, better than a brute. A few years must close his life, and this mind which knew so much, and was so glorious, will be lost forever. And if by chance, (and since by this theory all things come by chance, such a result ought not to be surprising,) and if by chance the human race should become extinct, there will then, alas! be no knowledge in the Universe! S.

## DEATH.

To die is the fate of humanity. This heart cannot always beat—these limbs cannot always move. And happy is it for us; for with all its

delights and pleasures this world is an unfit residence for immortal beings. Still there is no thought that falls with a deeper chill upon the warm and affectionate heart than that of death. In the midst of our earthly joys, surrounded by our friends, animated by budding and blossoming hopes of youth, tied down to the earth by the silken cords of early and pure affection, who can think without a shudder of the dark, cold grave? We pass by that "house appointed for all living," and would almost forget that by and by we are to give the parting hand and the last farewell, and lie down with the great congregation of the dead. Yet often, in our most careless and joyous hours, the unwelcome thought will intrude. The gayest scene of human life has some sad memento of our common destiny; in the garden there is a sepulchre; at the feast of royalty there is a prophet hand. Daily the sable hearse is passing us. We see amidst the very flowers of spring the blightings of winter. Close our eyes and our ears as we may, we cannot but see the desolations of death, and hear the groans of the dying, and feel the unwelcome truth, that our "dust must return to the dust as it was." S.

## INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

Although Christianity has done less in refining, correcting, and elevating the human mind than we could wish, and far less than inspiration has given us promise that it will eventually accomplish, still it has wrought changes in the condition of our race, of which fancy herself, in her wildest vagaries, two thousand years ago, would scarcely have dared to dream. The sceptic may sneer, and the philosopher may theorize, but neither the one nor the other can tell how, denying the power of christianity, so much has been effected for the amelioration of man's condition. Many of the wild and turbulent passions of human nature have been checked in their career and softened down, and principles, acting with something of the purity and energy of a better world have been deeply implanted in the soul. It is true the gross corruptions with which Christianity has been so long, and is still disgraced, have tended greatly to paralyze her powers, destroy her influence, and neutralize her spirit. But still with all "the inventions of men" that have been attached to her, and which, like an incubus, have weighed her down, Christianity has done, and is now doing great good. And yet we are surrounded with so many evils, there are so many besetting sins lingering about us, that, forgetting the past, we are sometimes more than half disposed to believe that nothing has been done in the almost boundless field of human improvement. There are, besides, many well meaning and even intelligent christians, who seem to find a kind of pleasure, (perhaps they may gratify a species of Pharisaical pride) in sighing over the depravity of the age, and exaggerating the vices of "the present evil world." Could we give implicit credence to their high-colored representations, we must suppose the human race constantly deteriorating, that vice was fast driving virtue from the earth, and that were it not for the exertions of *themselves* and *their friends*, the whole world would soon be one wide-spread and intractable desolation. While, with regret, we acknowledge that there is but too much of human depravity still existing, we feel that it would be injustice to Heaven not to confess its beneficence in thus far prospering to a good extent the religion of Jesus, and in vouchsafing us such cheering hopes for the future.

We look forward into coming time and see our earth a paradise. The Lord himself, in the language of prophesy, "shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." We may ask how this glorious and happy era is to be introduced? We answer: By the natural and legitimate operations of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The *principles* of that gospel are to be universally diffused and *felt*; they are to gain a controlling influence over the hearts and conduct of mankind. Men are to become *christians*, in some proper sense of that term, not mere nominal christians, but *disciples* and *followers* of Christ. S.

## PRINCIPLE OF ACTION.

Recompense to no man evil for evil. *Romans* xii, 17.

One of the distinguishing excellencies of the Christian religion is, that it recommends itself to "the business and bosom" of man in the daily intercourse of ordinary life. Though peculiarly fitted for the more unusual occurrences of time —seasons of adversity—the bed of languishing—and the hour of death, it is wisely, yea, perfectly adapted to the common wants and circumstances of our race. If the worth of a religion may be tested by the peace, it brings us in health, or the hopes it affords us in affliction, we may also determine its value with equal certainty by the influence it exerts on our hearts, and the improvement it produces in our lives.

Poor indeed is that system of faith which teaches the exercise of no high and ennobling principles of moral action—which does not come home to the bosom with a controlling power, and bring forth the practical fruits of virtuous and sanctified affections. The religion of Jesus is remarkable for the spirit it breathes in its moral as well as doctrinal inculcations. It was announced by the heavenly messengers, as "on earth peace, good will among men." And well does it deserve such high commendation. For nothing can be more obvious than the fact that the gospel was intended by its Divine Author to diffuse *peace and good will* throughout the whole earth. It was to suppress or destroy the low and grovelling passions that war against the soul—to remove hatred and ill will and *revenge*, that spirit hell, from the human breast—to teach the world no longer to *recompense evil for evil*—and to make all men *feel* and *act* like brethren. It was to diffuse itself through our whole mind, transforming us in the temper of our feelings into the glorious image of our blessed Lord. It was to mingle with us in the daily and hourly scenes and duties of life, guiding us in the pleasing pathway, too seldom trodden, of pure virtue and unbroken peace. In short it was intended to change ultimately the aspect of the whole moral world—to introduce harmony instead of discord, love instead of hatred, to teach mankind to return *good* instead of *evil* for evil, and to light up with Heaven's own smile the dark and often cheerless habitations of men. S.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## SOURCE OF HAPPINESS.

Experience is continually teaching mankind that at the best and most prosperous periods of life—even when our most favorite objects have been attained, and our most ardent wishes realized—the soul is still far from being satisfied. A longing for something never yet within our grasp, is hanging heavily upon our hearts, and casting a shadow over the spirits that would go forth in the sunshine of joyousness and peace. Which way shall we turn for the object, of which our unsatisfied heart tells us we are yet unpossessed? Where shall we look for *Happiness?* Shall we gaze back on the scenes of the past, and bid memory restore the time when our cup of youthful pleasure was filled to the brim? No: that cup was sweet, but there were dregs of bitterness at the bottom. Shall we look to the present? We have learned that its most delightful pleasures are not sufficient fully to gratify us. Even the most vain and unthinking must sometimes sadly feel

"How pleasure like the passing wind,
Blows by, and leaves us nought behind,
But grief at last."

Hope may create fairy visions of bliss, to be realized in the future, but we dare not trust to them, for experience has taught us that it is idle to dream that to-morrow will be happier than to-day. We remember that many a golden vision as bright as the present has danced before our eyes, that it has mocked us for a little while, and then faded away.

Since the frivolous pleasures of the world cannot long interest us, there can be but one object calculated to afford us permanent enjoyment, and that is *Religion*. Religion may indeed be called "a light from heaven," for it throws a brilliant lustre over the cheerless aspect of misfortune, and smooths the rough and thorny paths that mortals are condemned to tread. Human nature would repine; but religion checks her murmurs and points us to a home where suffering and sorrow are unknown. It tells us that a friend is there who can never change: and it is sweet, when our hearts have been beleaguered and stormed by the vexations and disappointments, which at all points are perpetually assailing us, to turn to that friend and know that he will never deceive us. And sweet it is to remember, when earthly friendships like the broken reed give way, that we may rest upon him who is "from everlasting to everlasting," and that he "will never fail us nor forsake us." C. M. S.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## THE LOCK OF HAIR.

Of all relics, I think a lock of hair the most lasting, and unlike other mementoes never loses its value, inasmuch, as it is a part of the beloved object. What tender recollections does not this auburn tress give rise to? A lock of my mother's hair! Ah! how forcibly does this sight recall the image of that affectionate parent, and how plainly can I behold that countenance beaming with pensive sweetness, fixed on the objects of her maternal regard. Yes, I can behold the placid brow upon which this lock rested in proud security, and 'neath which, those mild blue eyes beamed with such heavenly composure. And I can remember, also, when, for some little act of disobedience, how I dreaded meeting a reproving look from the eyes of my mother, and felt unhappy till again restored to favor.

Though many years have elapsed since I pronounced the endearing name of mother, yet, is the image of that fond parent enshrined too deeply in my heart ever to be forgotten. The pious instructions received at her hand have never left me, but frequently return, and with them remorse, for not having better, and more diligently observed them. Often after having strayed from the path of duty, have I recalled the tender admonitions of my mother, and wept in idea at what would have been her sensations could she have known my derelictions. Happy, happy infancy! when a mother's hand prepared thy comforts, and a mother's hand would wipe away the tears thy little troubles caused thee to shed; and who directed thy tender mind to know and worship thy creator.

How oft before thy hallowed form
With feelings pure, and language warm,
Breathed forth our artless prayers
To God, that he would please to bless
The widow, and the fatherless,
Then, and in coming years.

The thoughts and feelings of childhood, I love to cherish; and never am I so disposed to serve, and praise my Maker, as when I recollect the care of my departed mother.

How greatly mothers have it in their power to form the future character and excellence of their children; and how much have those parents

to answer for, who neglect their plain and positive duty. I can truly say I owe much of my religious frame of mind to the early influence and example of my mother—the remembrance of whose virtues will never leave me, even though they were not recalled by this valued "lock of hair." S. A. M.

We are permitted to make the following extract from a letter, written by a very respectable gentleman in Connecticut, to a friend, who is now in this city.

"I rejoice much at the intelligence you communicated, that the "Lord is doing a great work" in New-Haven. It will be as the breaking in of light in dark places. No where in America have there been greater efforts to keep down the *truth*, and exclude *light*, so far as religious subjects are concerned, than in New-Haven; where the great engine of orthodoxy, (Yale College) is brought to bear on public sentiment, with a tremendous power, which, superadded to the monied, and various other aristocratic influences, which prevail in our populous towns, has hitherto made 'darkness visible' in the very spot, which the advocates of antiquated and pernicious errors, have honored as the Athens of America, and the seat of science. *But the worship of false Gods will not always prevail even at Ephesus.*"

We have been politely favored by the Author, with a copy of a Sermon, delivered at Westford, Mass. by Br. Russel Streeter, occasioned by the death of Miss Abigail Reed, a *victim* of "Modern Revivals."

## MODERN REVIVALS.

"*By their fruits ye shall know them.*"

We have just been informed, on the most unquestionable authority, that a very respectable Physician of this city, was taken to the Lunatic Asylum a week or two since, and is now laboring under complete alienation of mind, from Religious phrenzy.

The last Hartford Inquirer states that a young lady in Simsbury destroyed herself the week previous, by means of Laudnum. She had attended a Revival Meeting in the neighborhood, and became gloomy and dejected, and expressed a wish that her friends would watch her, as she feared she should commit suicide. Their vigilance, it appears, was not strict enough, as she was found, when too late, with a bottle of the fatal liquid under her pillow.

The Newport Sentinel says, "A young lady was recently brought to a Physician in this place, for medical advice, who afforded a melancholy instance of the effects of the fanaticism of "four days' meetings." She had resided for some time past in some part of Massachusetts, where she had attended these meetings, and listened to the terrible mysteries and denunciations which characterize them, until reason lost her empire, and left her the saddest and most deplorable spectacle on earth—a mind completely prostrated."

The Keene Sentinel, in a paragraph headed "Religious Fanatacism," states, that "on the Sabbath succeeding the late four days' meetings at Acworth, a respectable member of the church began the Lord's prayer, at a prayer meeting held in the Town House, and gradually raised his voice till he was heard distinctly 30 or 40 rods. In the afternoon, *he seized his mother round the waist, and his sister by the arm, at the steps, and with Herculean strength, bore them up the aisle, overturning several females.* He was secured, and has since been calm. He said he supposed he was going to Heaven, and seized his mother and sister as if to bear them with him."

The Haverhill Chronicle says, that "A Mr. Porter, a Portrait Painter, who has, for a few weeks, been engaged in this village, attended a four days' meeting here, and was seriously impressed. His intellect is now prostrated, and he has become a perfect fanatic. He went to Boston on Monday last to make *spiritual* communications to Dr. Beecher. Previous to his departure, he urged that a child, recently buried, should be dug up, confident that he had been invested with power from God to reanimate him. Humanity and philanthropy weep over the multiplied and multiplying instances of mental alienation.

The New Haven Columbian Register says there are many cases of religious madness in that county, and a large number within the state.

The Universalist Watchman of Woodstock, Vt. says, a Mrs. Kendall, of that town, in consequence of the recent anti-religious excitements, is so deranged that she requires the constant and unremitting attention of her friends. At times, she is extremely boisterous. This is the kind of *religion* which is the natural consequence of four days' meetings.

*Outrageous Blasphemy.*—We have heard, says the last Boston Trumpet, that at a recent four days' meeting, in Rindge, N. H., we believe we give the name of the town correctly, there was a scenic representation of what the clergy call the day of judgment. One of them took the pulpit, and personated the judge. The pious ones took the right hand, and the rest of the congregation were disposed of on the left. To heighten the description, the judge repeated the well known words of the parable, saying, "Come ye blessed," &c. to those on his right, and "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire," to those on his left. There was a large number of children present. O, said the clergyman to them, "What if the day of judgment were to come now? What if the archangel's trumpet were this moment to be blown?" At this signal a trumpeter, who had been hired for the purpose, and whom the priests had secreted back of the singing seats, blew a tremendous blast with his trumpet. The effect was indescribable. The children were frighted nearly into fits, and some of them, it is said, have not yet recovered the shock. If this account be true, or if any thing has transpired approaching to it, it is one of the most audacious and unjustifiable tricks we ever heard of, and deserves severely to be reprehended.

We have received the following from an unquestionable source, with *name* and *place*. Still we give place to it with regret, and would not do it, did we not deem it necessary to hold up to merited disapprobation, that spirit which is too often exhibited in the progress of the present fanatical excitements. Strange, indeed, must be the feelings of that *wife*, who could adopt expressions like those below, towards a husband. We should think it was "obtaining a HOPE" with a witness, and should be disposed to doubt our own senses, had we not frequently, ourselves, witnessed a spirit too nearly allied to it. For the honor of the person concerned, we could hope the relation would admit of palliation.

P.

Spirit of revivals.—A very respectable gentleman, Postmaster in the town of ——— Conn. a few days since found upon a table in his parlor, a great variety of spiritual nonsense called—*tracts*. He took up one and commenced reading it, but finding its contents superlatively foolish, threw it in the fire. His wife, who had been recently converted at a "four days' meeting," remarked, that she "*hoped* the time would come when she should see him roasting in h—l in the same manner that the tract was burning in the grate."

## NEW SOCIETIES.

Universalist Societies have recently been formed in Pownal, Abbot and Bethel, Me., in Bedford and Epping, N. H., and in the village of Lodi, N. Y., and we learn that the speedy formation of one in Carthage, Me. is in contemplation.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## QUESTIONS

*For Limitarians to Answer.*

1. Shall God's counsel *stand*, and will he do *all* his pleasure, that is, does he work *all* things after the counsel of his *own* will?
2. Is his *will* opposed to his *pleasure?*
3. Has he *two* wills in opposition to each other?
4. Is it his *will* that *all* men be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth?
5. Is God's justice opposed to his doing his own will?
6. Does his justice require that his will be done?
7. Will he be strictly just, that is, will he do his will? S. J. H.


## THE CHRISTIAN PREACHER,

AND UNIVERSALIST REGISTER,

Is a Monthly publication of Original Sermons, by living Universalist Ministers. The design of the work is to spread before the public the best pulpit productions of clergymen in this denomination, with a view to correct the misrepresentations which are abroad concerning our sentiments, and to promote the cause of a rational faith and of practical godliness.

Each number will contain at least 16 octavo pages. On the last two pages of the covers will be published, under the title of Universalist Register, an account of Events interesting to the Universalist denomination, short Expositions of scripture passages, &c.

Terms—One dollar per year, payable in advance, or on delivery of the first number. The second volume will commence in January, 1832.

WILLIAM A. DREW,
*Publisher and Editor.*

*Augusta, Me. Nov.* 15, 1831.

*** Subscriptions received at this office.


## LETTERS AND REMITTANCES,

*Received at this office, ending November 24th.*

S. S. $2; H. W. S. $2; S. G. $2; J. P. H. $2; J. S. $1; S. P. $2; J. P. C. $2; C. H. $2; R. A. M'N., $1, all of Norwalk, Conn; A. C. New-Canaan, Ct. $2; T. W. Wilton, Ct. $2; W. S. Newark, N. J. $2; D. B. Bloomfield, N. J. $1; A. B. Cauldwell, N. J. $1; P. M. New-Brunswick, N. J.; T. D. Esq. Smyrna, Del.; M. W. R., Avon, N. Y.; Rev. Z. Fuller, Philadelphia, dated Nov. 5th; P. Master, Kingston, N. J. $2.

## RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

Br. S. J. Hillyer, will preach at Middleville, N. J. on Sunday, the 27th inst.

Br. T. Fisk will preach at Hempstead, L. I. on Sunday next, 27th inst., and at Jamaica, on Monday evening following.

Br. Robert Smith, will preach at the Town House, in Norwalk, Conn. on Sunday, the 4th of Dec. forenoon and afternoon, and at Saugatuck in the evening.

Br. Hillyer will also preach at Rye, N. Y. on Sunday, the 4th of Decmeber.

Br. Smith will also preach at Bridgeport, Conn. on Sunday, the 11th of December.

The Brethren in the two last named places, will please make the necessary arrangements.

## NOTICE.

"The Ladies' Dorcas Society, Grand-street," will meet on Wednesday next, 30th inst. at Mrs. Packard's, No. 276 Madison-street, at 2 o'clock, P. M.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## JUDAH.

Wake Judah! the gem from thy brow shall be torn,
Thy name be a hissing, thy country a scorn—
Like the lightning-scathed forest shall wither thy might,
For the eye of Jehovah is scorching and bright.

The foeman shall come 'mid thy revel and mirth,
With the strong arm of vengeance to crush thee to earth;
Thy hearths and thine altars shall reek with thy gore,
And the halls of thy fathers shall know thee no more.

The long howl shall peal where thy minstrels have sung
The Jackall's wild shriek where the anthem hath rung,
The owl shall fly hooting where Judah hath slept,
And the Hyena stalk where her children have wept.

Oh, who will be left to mourn over thy fate—
Thine altars insulted—thy hearths desolate—
Thy daughters polluted—thy matrons defiled?
Oh, Judah! thy city will be but a wild! C. M. S.

## HOPE.

BY GOLDSMITH.

The wretch condemned with life to part,
Still, still on hope relies;
And every pang that rends his heart,
Bids expectation rise.

Hope, like the glimmering taper's light,
Adorns and cheers the way;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray.

## HEAVEN.

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it; and the Lamb is the light thereof." Rev. xxi, 23.

There is a land where earthly wo,
And earthly sorrow all shall cease;
No sin shall grieve, no tear shall flow,
In that sweet land of love and peace.

There is a sunless, starless sky,
And yet no darkness there is found;
Night cannot spread her canopy
Where God's own glory shines around.

There is a home where friends shall meet,
And never, never part again;
And those, who loved on earth, repeat
The vows they pledged in sorrow then.

Eternally that land shall bloom,
Grief from that cloudless clime be driven,
Immortal joys pervade that home,
That land, that clime, that home is heaven.

## GOODNESS OF THE DEITY

*Displayed in the Beauty of Creation.*—DWIGHT.

Were all the interesting diversities of color and form to disappear, how unsightly, dull, and wearisome, would be the aspect of the world! The pleasures, conveyed to us by the endless varieties, with which these sources of beauty are presented to the eye, are so much things of course, and exist so much without intermission, that we scarcely think either of their nature, their number, or the great proportion which they constitute in the whole mass of our enjoyment. But, were an inhabitant of this country to be removed from its delightful scenery to the midst of an *Arabian* desert, a boundless expanse of sand, a waste, spread with uniform desolation, enlivened by the murmur of no stream, and cheered by the beauty of no verdure; although he might live in a palace, and riot in splendor and luxury, he would, I think, find life a dull, wearisome, melancholy round of existence; and, amid all his gratifications, would sigh for the hills and valleys of his native land, the brooks, and rivers, the living lustre of the Spring, and the rich glories of the Autumn. The ever-varying brilliancy and grandeur of the landscape, and the magnificence of the sky, sun, moon, and stars, enter more extensively into the enjoyment of mankind, than we, perhaps, ever think, or can possibly apprehend, without frequent and extensive investigation.—This beauty and splendor of the objects around us, it is ever to be remembered, is not necessary to their existence, nor to what we commonly intend by their usefulness. It is, therefore, to be regarded as a source of pleasure gratuitously superinduced upon the general nature of the objects themselves, and, in this light, as a testimony of the divine goodness peculiarly affecting.

*May you die among your Kindred.*—GREENWOOD.

It is a sad thing to feel that we must die away from our home. Tell not the invalid who is yearning after his distant country, that the atmosphere around him is soft; that the gales are filled with balm, and the flowers are springing from the green earth;—he knows that the softest air to his heart would be the air which hangs over his native land; that more grateful than all the gales of the south, would breathe the low whispers of anxious affection; that the very icicles clinging to his own eaves, and the snow beating against his own windows, would be far more pleasant to his eyes, than the bloom and verdure which only more forcibly remind him how far he is from that one spot which is dearer to him than the world beside. He may, indeed, find estimable friends, who will do all in their power to promote his comfort and assuage his pains; but they cannot supply the place of the long known and long loved; they cannot read as in a book the mute language of his face; they have not learned to wait upon his habits, and anticipate his wants, and he has not learned to communicate, without hesitation, all his wishes, impressions, and thoughts to them. He feels that he is a stranger; and a more desolate feeling than that could not visit his soul. How much is expressed by that form of oriental benediction, *May you die among your kindred!*

## A SISTER'S LOVE.

There is no purer feeling kindled upon the altar of human affections, than a sister's pure, uncontaminated love for her brother. It is unlike all other affections; so disconnected with selfish sensuality; so feminine in its developement; so dignified, and yet, with all, so fond, so devoted. Nothing can alter it, nothing can suppress it. The world may revolve, and its revolutions effect changes in the fortunes, in the character, and in the disposition of the brother, yet if he wants, whose hand will so speedily stretch out as that of his sister; and if his character is maligned, whose voice will so readily swell in his advocacy. Next to a mother's unquenchable love, a sister's is pre-eminent. It rests so exclusively on the ties of consanguinity for its sustenance, it is so wholly divested of passion, and springs from such a deep recess in the human bosom, that when a sister once fondly and deeply regards her brother, that affection is blended with her existence, and the lamp that nourishes it expires only with that existence. In all the annals of crime, it is considered something anomalous to find the hand of a sister raised in anger against her brother, or her heart nurturing the seeds of hatred, envy, or revenge, in regard to that brother. In all affections of woman, there is a devotedness which cannot be properly appreciated by man. In those regards where the passions are not at all necessary in increasing the strength of the affections, more sincere truth and pure feeling may be expected, than in such as are dependant upon each other for their duration as well as their felicities. A sister's love, in this respect, is peculiarly remarkable. There is no selfish gratification in its outpourings; it lives from the natural impulse; and personal charms are not in the slightest degree necessary to its birth or duration.

## DEFINITION OF TASTE.

Taste is the sensibility of our nature to the various forms of beauty which the Creator hath spread with such profusion around us. He who made the mind for beauty, made beauty also for the mind. He hath pencilled it upon the spangled meadow and on the burnished cloud. He hath chiselled it in the gigantic majesty of the cedar of Lebanon, and in the trembling loveliness of the tendril which twines around its branches. In obedience to its laws, he hath taught the linnet to flutter in the grove, and the planets to revolve in their pathway through the heavens. We hear it in the purling brook and in the thundering cataract, and we perceive it yet more legibly inscribed upon all those social and moral qualities in the exercise of which our Maker hath intended, that we should be forever approaching nearer and nearer to the exhaustless source of unreached excellence. These are the models which nature presents for the contemplation of the artist; and, just in proportion to his power of detecting among her complicated forms the simple elements of loveliness, and of combining them according to the examples which she herself has set before him, will he fill the vacant canvas with images of beauty, and animate the dull cold marble with breathing intelligence. It is this communion with nature which confers upon the artist what Lord Chatham has so well denominated the prophetic eye of taste, and which has left the Belvidere Apollo and the Medicean Venus, the temple on the Ilyssus and the temple of Minerva, to illustrate to all coming generations, what genius can accomplish. We see thus, that in taste, as in all the original operations of the human mind, it is the sublimest attribute of intelligence to see things as they are.

WAYLAND.

It is this way of thinking—it is these melancholy truths, that make religion so precious to the poor miserable children of men—if it is a mere phantom existing only in the heated imagination of enthusiasm,

"What truth on earth so precious as the lie?"

My idle reasonings sometimes make me a little sceptical, but the necessities of my heart always give these cold philosophisings the lie. *Burns.*


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